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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/814,066	06/21/2001	Franz Knauseder	20551/1/JR	2541

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EXAMINER

SAFAVI, MICHAEL

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3673

DATE MAILED: 09/24/2003

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/814,066

Applicant(s)

KNAUSEDER, FRANZ

Examiner

M. Safavi

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on March 13, 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-31 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-31 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

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In view of the Brief on Appeal filed on March 13, 2003, PROSECUTION IS HEREBY REOPENED. A new ground of rejection is set forth below.

To avoid abandonment of the application, appellant must exercise one of the following two options:

- (1) file a reply under 37 CFR 1.111 (if this Office action is non-final) or a reply under 37 CFR 1.113 (if this Office action is final); or,
- (2) request reinstatement of the appeal.

If reinstatement of the appeal is requested, such request must be accompanied by a supplemental appeal brief, but no new amendments, affidavits (37 CFR 1.130, 1.131 or 1.132) or other evidence are permitted. See 37 CFR 1.193(b)(2).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 2, lines 25-26, "the adhesive with an activating substance" lacks an antecedent basis within the claim.

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Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1, 2, 14-16, 21-24, and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Austrian reference 405,560 in view of German reference 29703962 when considering any of Scarlett, Keller et al., and Turner.

Austrian reference '560 discloses the configuration of attaching flat structural cladding or substrate components as recited in claims 1-20 of the instant application. Austrian '560 does not appear to disclose any specific use of adhesive with the attaching configuration. However, German reference 29703962 teaches utilization of a contact adhesive between tongue and groove joints so as to establish a secure engagement between cladding panels of a substrate. And, each of Scarlett, Keller et al., and Turner teach application of an adhesive upon or within a locking joint between structural members with Scarlett, for example, teaching a desire to establish a self-locking assembly to achieve a joint which does not require independent clamping or other retention means during curing of the glue or adhesive, col. 3, lines 45-48 of Scarlett. See, also, col. 2, lines 24-39 of Scarlett.

To have provided the floor tile assembly of Austrian '560 with adhesive between and within the tongue and groove joints between the panels 1, 2, including any particular adhesive,

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thus securely fastening adjacent floor tiles one to another while realizing any and all advantages of adhesives within a self-locking joint, would have constituted an obvious expedient to one of ordinary skill in the art as taught by German reference 29703962 when considering any of Scarlett, Keller et al., and Turner.

5. Claims 1-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Austrian reference 405,560 in view of German reference 29703962 when considering any of Scarlett, Keller et al., and Turner as applied to claims 1, 2, 14-16, 21-24, and 31 above, and further in view of Roesch et al.

Roesch et al., for example, teach utilization and advantages of various “two component” adhesives including microencapsulatable solvent adhesives that contain polymer resin and appropriate solvents as well as polyvinyl acetate base, methyl acrylate base, epoxide base etc.

To have provided the modified floor tile assembly of Austrian ‘560 with a two component adhesive, (including adhesive with activating substance, microencapsulated adhesive, etc.), between and within the tongue and groove joints between the panels 1, 2, thus securely fastening adjacent floor tiles one to another while realizing any and all advantages of such well known adhesives and particularly “two component adhesives”, would have constituted an obvious expedient to one of ordinary skill in the art as taught by Roesch et al.

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to M. Safavi whose telephone number is (703) 308-2168.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Safavi', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**MICHAEL SAFAVI
PRIMARY EXAMINER
ART UNIT 354**

M. Safavi
September 20, 2003